

STATE OF WISCONSIN
CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION

LABOR RELATIONS SPECIALIST
CLASSIFICATION SERIES

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of This Classification Specification

This classification specification is the basic authority under ER 2.04, Wis. Adm. Code, for making classification decisions relative to present and future professional positions located within the Office of State Employment Relations, Division of Compensation and Labor Relations. Positions allocated to this classification must meet the definition of confidential and professional as defined in s. 111.81(7) and (15), Wis. Stats. This classification specification will not specifically identify every eventuality or combination of duties and responsibilities of positions that currently exist, or those that result from changing program emphasis in the future. Rather, it is designed to serve as a framework for classification decision-making in this occupational area.

Classification decisions must be based on the “best fit” of the duties within the existing classification structure. The “best fit” is determined by the majority (i.e., more than 50%) of the work assigned to and performed by the position when compared to the class concepts and definition of this specification or through other methods of position analysis. Position analysis defines the nature and character of the work through the use of any or all of the following: definition statements; listing of areas of specialization; representative examples of work performed; allocation patterns of representative positions; job evaluation guide charts, standards or factors; statements of inclusion and exclusion; licensure or certification requirements; and other such information necessary to facilitate the assignment of positions to the appropriate classification.

B. Inclusions

This classification series encompasses professional labor relations positions located within the Office of State Employment Relations (OSER), Division of Compensation and Labor Relations. Positions allocated to this series perform a combination of duties, including: representing the State in contract negotiations with labor unions representing the various bargaining units; maintaining effective labor relations with labor unions representing assigned bargaining units through the life of negotiated agreements; assisting Legal Counsel in representing the State in Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) cases or serving as the Employer’s Representative before the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC); representing the State in complex arbitration cases; developing and conducting training on labor relations subjects and contract interpretation and application for statewide or agency specific use; performing research and analysis on issues which may affect certified representatives and/or bargaining unit employees; and consulting with agency human resources and employment relations representatives and OSER bargaining team members on a variety of labor relations issues.

C. Exclusions

Excluded from this series are the following types of positions:

1. Positions that are involved in the employment relations program of a state agency other than the Office of State Employment Relations and are more appropriately classified as Employment Relations Specialist or Employment Relations Program Coordinator.
2. Positions that spend the majority of their time performing paraprofessional or clerical work related to labor relations.
3. Positions that do not meet the definition of confidential and professional as defined in s. 111.81 (7) and (13) and administered and interpreted by the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission.
3. All other positions that are more appropriately identified by other classification specifications.

D. Entrance and Progression Through This Series

Employees enter positions within this classification series by competitive examination. Progression to the entry, Senior and Chief levels will occur through reclassification as the employee satisfactorily attains the specified training, education, and experience and performs the full scope of duties identified as the entry, Senior, and Chief level.

II. DEFINITIONS

LABOR RELATIONS SPECIALIST

This is the entry level for professional positions that perform labor relations duties. Positions in this classification acquire knowledge of all areas of the Bureau of Labor Relations responsibilities through acting as employer advocate or as an assistant in the arbitration of issues ranging from basic labor contract language or routine disciplinary actions to arbitration resulting in discharge penalties; performing research and analysis of specific subject matters as assigned; functioning as assistant to the Chief Spokesperson for a bargaining team by maintaining accurate records of what transpires during the negotiation process including, but not limited to note-taking of “at the table” discussions, completion of documents such as language proposals and/or administrative documents and reports, and developing general knowledge of the contracts, State Employment Labor Relations Act (SELRA), and classification and compensation functions; assists more experienced staff in presenting basic supervisory training and advanced labor management training and specialized or agency tailored labor relations training classes; and consulting with state agency human resources and employment relations representatives for assigned subject areas. Work is performed under close progressing to limited supervision.

LABOR RELATIONS SPECIALIST – SENIOR

This is the objective level for professional positions that perform labor relations duties. Work is performed under general supervision. Positions provide contract interpretation to state agencies; independently represent the employer in complex arbitration cases; assist in the development of and present the labor relations portion of management/personnel administration training classes; and participate in the development and presentation of all portions of the advanced labor management training. Positions at this level perform in one or more of the following capacities representing the State in contract negotiations with a certified employee representative (i.e., bargaining unit): (1) assist the Chief Spokesperson in contract negotiations of a major agreement through the chairing of subcommittee(s) sessions or serving as a back-up

for the Chief Spokesperson for a bargaining unit, assisting in the development and implementation of bargaining strategy, etc.; (2) function as a Chief Spokesperson for a certified representative of small- or medium-sized bargaining unit(s) with limited discretion within specified parameters as to decisions regarding the development of bargaining strategy, commitment of resources such as staff time; or (3) function as Chief Spokesperson for negotiations with a certified representative of a single bargaining unit of limited scope and complexity (e.g., PERSA, Trades).

LABOR RELATIONS SPECIALIST – CHIEF

This is the advanced level for professional positions that perform very complex labor relations duties a majority of the time. Work is performed under general supervision with only a policy review by positions classified as Labor Relations Manager or by the Director, Bureau of Labor Relations. Positions allocated to this level function as: (1) the primary back-up to the Chief Spokesperson for the largest and most complex negotiations (i.e., WSEU); (2) the Chief Spokesperson for negotiations involving at least one bargaining unit representing a minimum of 1,200 employees (e.g., WPEC, SEA, WSP); (3) the Chief Spokesperson for multiple, small bargaining units; or (4) the position with primary responsibility for developing and updating the Bureau of Labor Relations training programs (e.g., Advanced Labor Management, Personnel Management, Labor Management Cooperation) and may also serve as back-up to a Chief Spokesperson position, as needed.

Positions are responsible for performing any combination of the following duties: developing and modifying bargaining strategy which includes assisting in the development of wage and benefit proposals, modifying or developing new contract language, and deciding when proposals should be initiated or withdrawn, etc.; maintaining continued effective labor-management relations with assigned bargaining unit representatives during the life of the contract; developing, modifying and presenting all portions of the Advanced Labor Management Training Program (ALM) and the labor relations portion of the basic OSER Management Training Program; representing the State in complex arbitration appeals including both language and discharge cases; assisting Legal Counsel in representing the State before the WERC in unfair labor practice cases and/or serving as primary employer advocate in such cases; consulting with state agencies concerning a variety of labor relations issues; and performing research and analysis of issues which may affect certified representatives or represented bargaining unit employees.

III. QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications required for these positions will be determined at the time of recruitment. Such determinations will be made based on an analysis of the goals and worker activities performed and by an identification of the education, training, work, or other life experience which would provide reasonable assurance that the knowledge and skills required upon appointment have been acquired.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

This classification series was created effective March 12, 2000 to replace the Labor Relations Specialist-Entry, -Advanced/Entry/Developmental, -Journey and -Senior classification series in order to accommodate the expansion of the broadband pay structure. Creation of the new series and abolishment of the former series were announced in Bulletin CLR/SC-109. The title structure published in Bulletin CLR/SC-109 was corrected in Bulletin CLR/SC-110. The Chief level was modified effective November 5, 2000 by adding allocation #4 and announced in Bulletin CLR/SC-122. This classification was further modified effective October 5, 2003 and announced in Bulletin OSER-0003-MRS-SC to better reflect position responsibilities and to change Department of Employment Relations to Office of State Employment Relations

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